

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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AMEMBASSY OSLO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SW

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH LIBERAL PARTY LEADER

SUMMARY: IN FIRST CONVERSATION WITH LIBERAL LEADER GUNNAR HELEN WE TALKED ABOUT RECENT HISTORY OF OUR RELATIONS AND HOW BASIC SWEDISH ORIENTATION TO "ANGLO-SAXON" WORLD WAS NOW RESOLIDIFIED. ON DOMESTIC AFFAIRS HE SAID THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF ELECTION IN 1975 AND DESCRIBED BACKGROUND OF HIS RECENT COOPERATION WITH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. END SUMMARY.

1. HAD MY FIRST CONVERSATION WITH LIBERAL PARTY LEADER GUNNAR HELEN JULY 11. HE EXPRESSED HIS WARM WELCOME TO ME AND TO OUR RENEWED AMBASSADORIAL RELATIONS, AND SKETCHED HIS VERSION OF HISTORY OF US-SWEDISH DIFFICULTIES. 1966-70 WERE WORST YEARS, HE SAID, WHEN AT LEAST 60 PERCENT OF SWEDES WERE EMOTIONALLY COMMITTED TO OPPOSING US INDOCHINA POLICY. IT WAS NOT A "CLIQUE" AND CONSISTED OF ALL PARTIES AND STRATA OF SWEDISH SOCIETY. DURING THAT PERIOD HE WAS WORRIED THAT SWEDEN'S BASIC ORIENTATION TOWARD THE
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"ANGLO-SAXON" WORLD MIGHT SHIFT IRREVOCABLY, AND DURING

PERIOD HE WAS ACTIVE IN TRYING TO PRESENT A TRUE PICTURE OF AMERICA, CITING A SPEECH HE MADE ON 4TH OF JULY 1968 AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY AS AN EXAMPLE OF HIS EFFORTS. HE THEN SAID THAT HIS FEARS HAVE NOT BEEN REALIZED AND THAT STARTING ABOUT 1970 THE ORIENTATION STARTED SHIFTING BACK TO FRIENDSHIP WITH THE US AND NOW THINGS ARE NORMAL AGAIN.

2. ON THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE HE SAID THAT THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF ELECTIONS IN 1975 BECAUSE THE SCHEDULED 1976 ELECTIONS ARE MANDATORY AND IT WOULD BE IMPRACTICAL TO HAVE TWO ELECTIONS SO CLOSE TOGETHER. HE SAID THAT HIS RECENT COOPERATION WITH SOCIAL DEMOCRATES WAS IN NO WAY A COALITION AND WOULD NOT NECESSARILY LAST OR BE OPERATIVE ON ALL ISSUES. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATES MADE LIBERAL PARTY COOPERATION WITH THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS POSSIBLE BY MAKING IT CLEAR THEY WOULD NO LONGER COOPERATE WITH COMMUNISTS, AS THEY HAD DONE SINCE 1970, AND BY CO-OPTING MANY OF THE LIBERAL PARTY PROGRAMS WHICH THEY HAD REJECTED IN THE PAST. HE ALSO SAID THAT "DAILY ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, SOCIAL CRISIS REPORTS" COMING IN FROM OTHER EUROPEAN CAPITALS ALSO FOSTERED COOPERATION IN SWEDEN BECAUSE THE SWEDES COULD SEE CLEARLY THE CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY.

3. ON THE 1976 ELECTIONS, HELEN SAID THAT A NON-SOCIALIST VICTORY WAS POSSIBLE, BUT BASIC INTERNAL AND FOREIGN POLICY WOULD NOT CHANGE VERY MUCH AS SWEDES WERE BASICALLY SATISFIED WITH WHAT THEY HAD. I POINTED OUT THAT THIS SHOULD MEAN CONTINUANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN POWER, BUT HE SAID THAT THIS WAS NO CONTRADICTION IN SWEDISH TERMS, AS THE GREAT BLOC OF YOUNGER VOTERS DO NOT FEEL A STRONG SENSE OF TRADITION AND GRATITUDE AND WOULD VOTE FOR A CHANGE, AS YOUTH USUALLY WANTS A CHANGE.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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